

THE MIGHTY SPARROW



A TRICKSTER TALE OF THE AFRICAN CONGO

Rewritten by Edel Wignell

Illustrated by Cindy Douglas

PROPERTY OF
TOLONO GRADE SCHOOL
TOLONO, ILLINOIS

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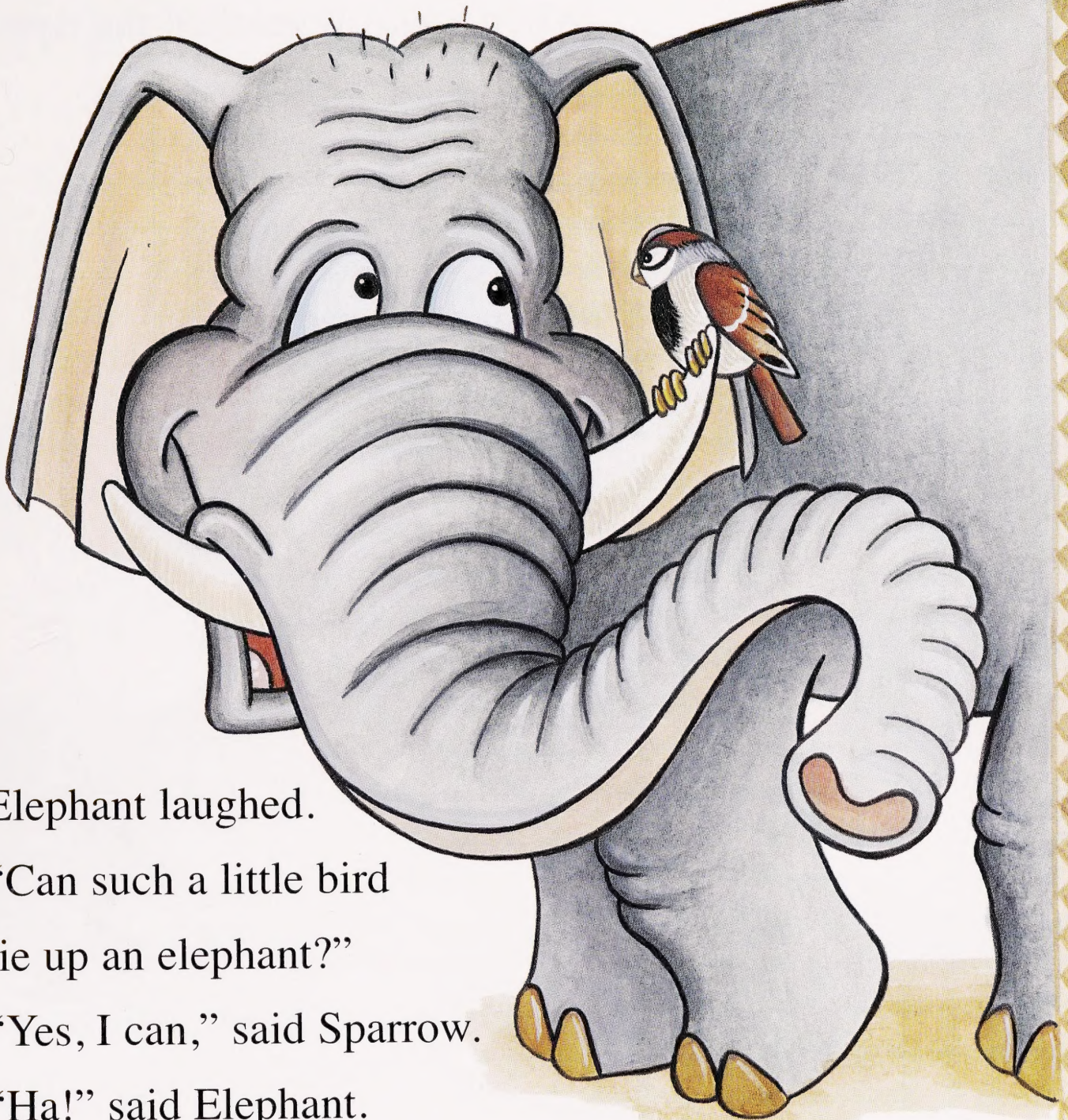
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THE AFRICAN CONGO**

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One day Elephant stamped past Sparrow's nest.
The branch shook so hard the eggs nearly fell out.
"Look where you're going!" said Sparrow.
"You almost upset my nest!
If you come here again, I'll tie you up!"



Elephant laughed.

“Can such a little bird
tie up an elephant?”

“Yes, I can,” said Sparrow.

“Ha!” said Elephant.

“Tomorrow I’ll come back to see how strong you are!”

He moved on, and Sparrow flew off to bathe.



When Sparrow reached the river,
she found Crocodile asleep.

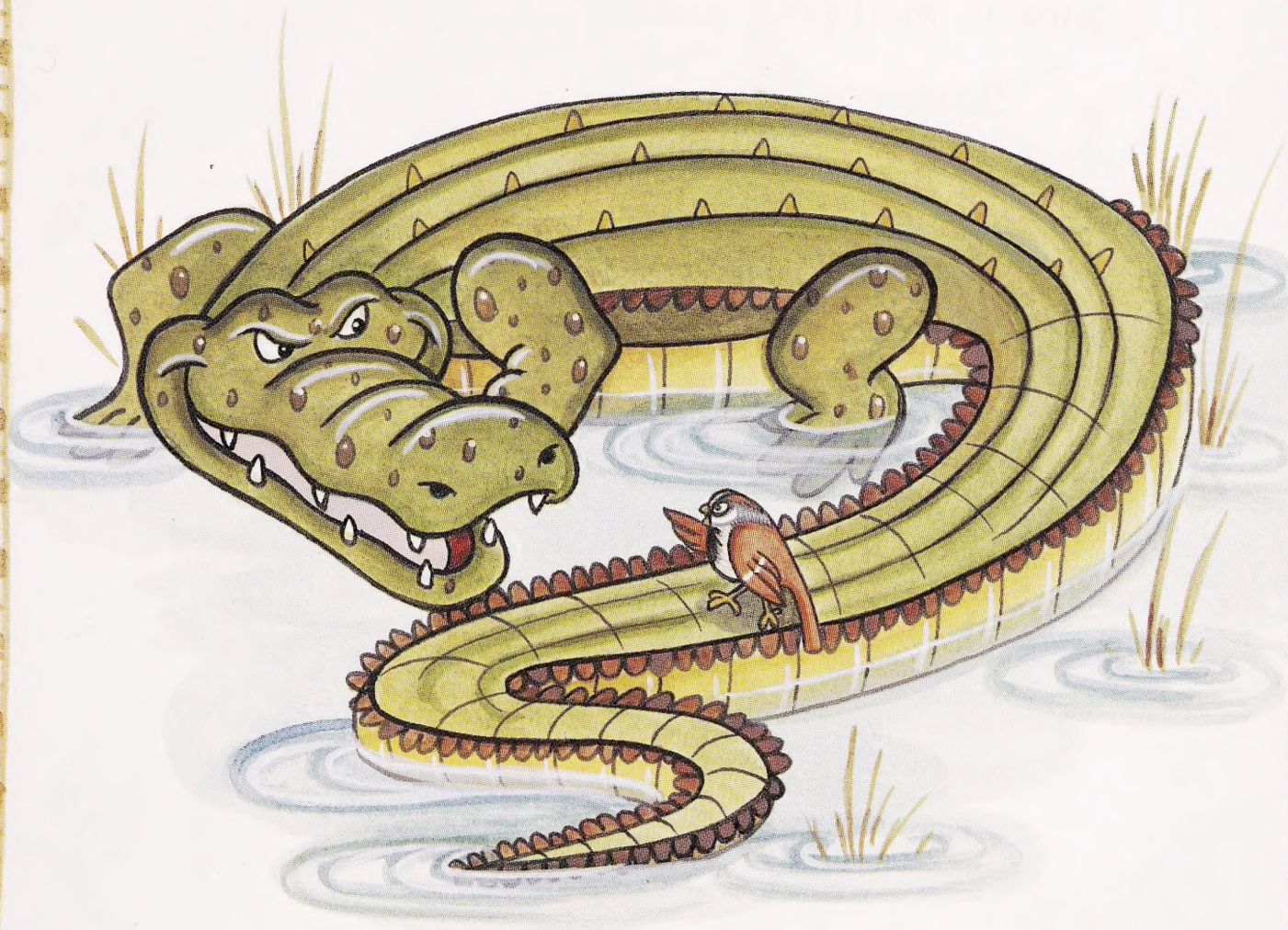
“Wake up!” she shouted.

“This is my bathing place!

If you come here again,

I’ll tie you up!”





Crocodile laughed.

“Can such a little bird tie up a crocodile?”

“Yes, I can,” said Sparrow.

“Ha!” said Crocodile.

“Tomorrow I’ll come back to see how strong you are!”



The next day Sparrow saw Elephant coming.

“I warned you not to come here again!”

she said. “Now I will tie you up!”

“Come and tie me up,” said Elephant.

“I want to see how strong you are.”

Sparrow brought a strong vine rope.

She tied it around Elephant’s neck.

“Can you wait while I get a drink of water?”

she said. “Then you’ll see how strong I am.”



Sparrow flew down to the river.

There she found Crocodile
basking in the sun.

“I warned you not to come here again,”
she said. “Now I’ll tie you up!”

“Come and tie me up,” said Crocodile.

“I want to see how strong you are.”

Sparrow took the other end
of the strong vine rope.

She tied it around Crocodile.

“Wait,” she said.

“I’ll go a little higher up the hill and pull.”



She flew up the hill to a tree.
From there she called to Elephant,
“Pull, Elephant!”

Then she flew down and called to Crocodile,
“Pull, Crocodile!”

Elephant pulled and Crocodile pulled.

Each one thought he was pulling against Sparrow.



Sparrow stayed in the trees.

Several times during the day,
she called to the two
big animals.



“Pull, Elephant! Pull harder!”

“Pull, Crocodile! Pull harder!”

They pulled all day.

By evening,
they were both worn out.



Sparrow flew to Crocodile.

“Have you had enough?” she asked.

“Yes, friend Sparrow,” he gasped.

“You are too strong for me. Untie me, and I’ll never come to your bathing place again.”

“Wait,” said Sparrow. “I have to check on my eggs.”



She flew to Elephant.

“Have you had enough?” she asked.

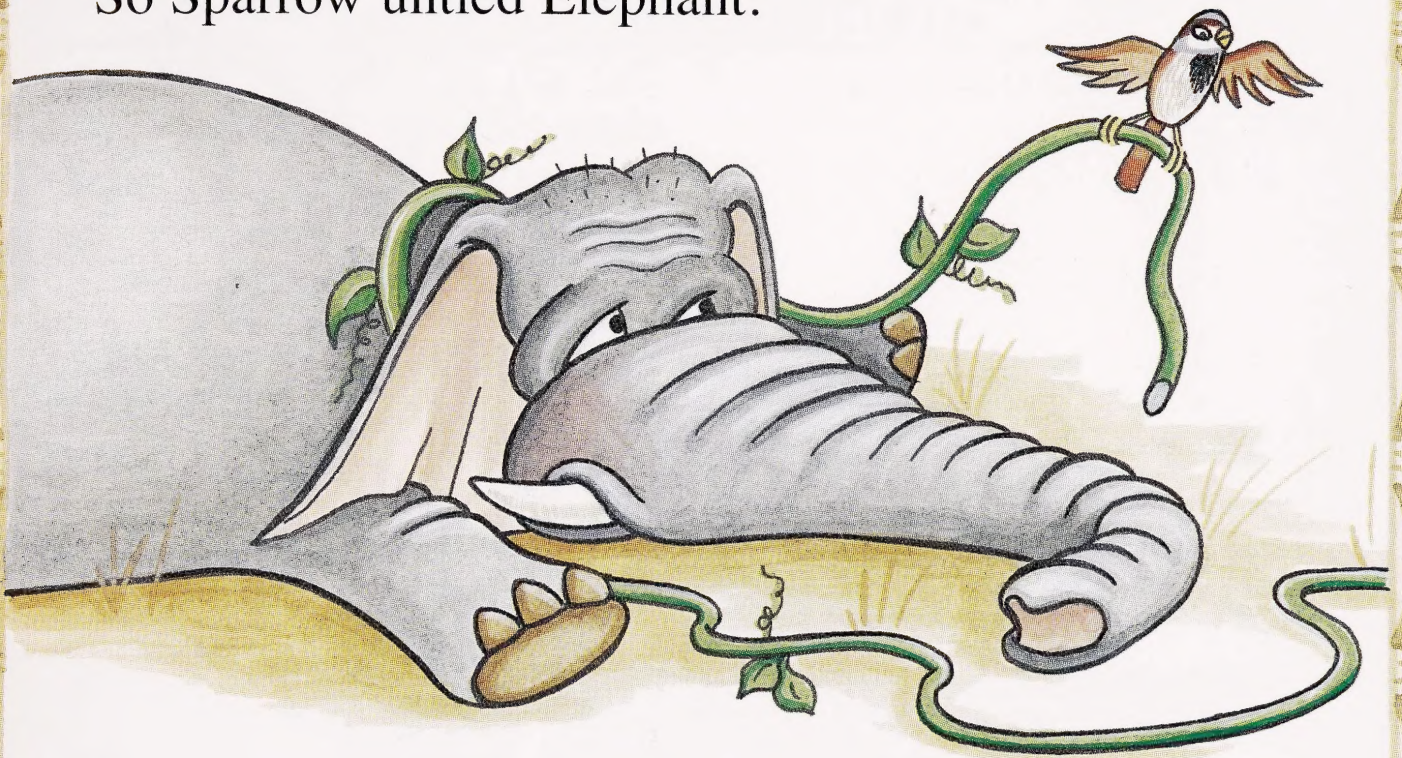
“Yes, friend Sparrow,” he panted.

“You are too strong for me.

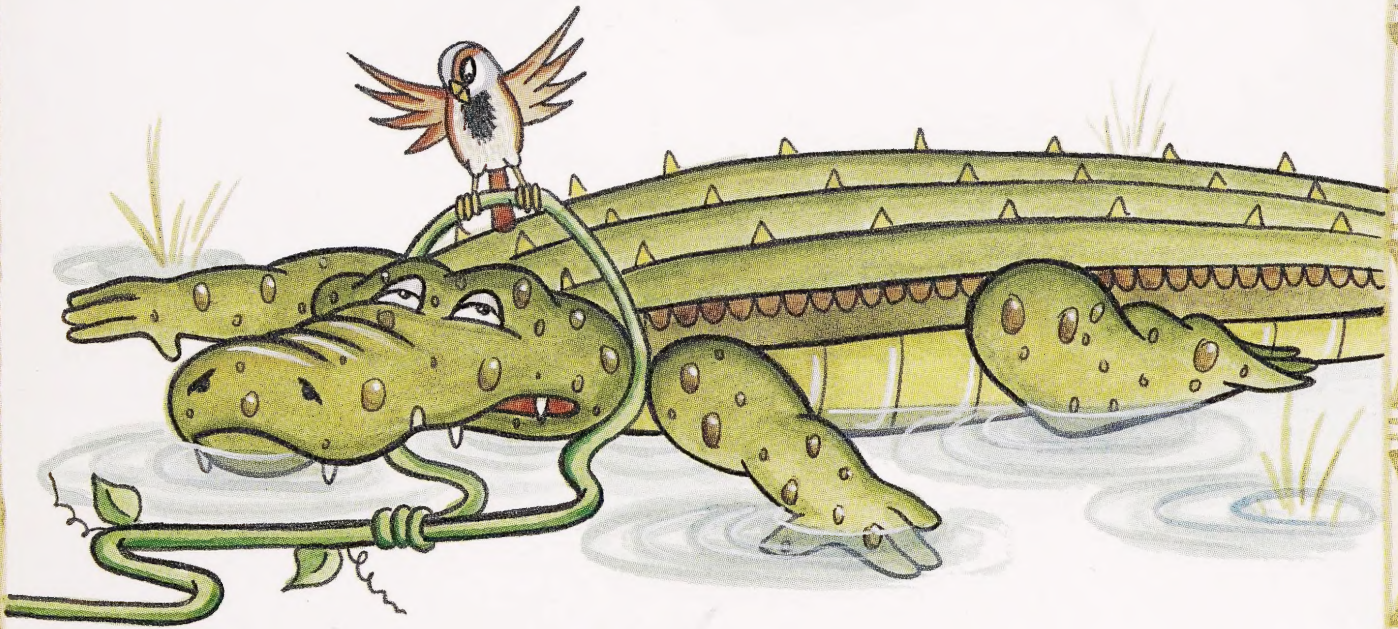
Untie me, and I’ll never shake your nest again.”



So Sparrow untied Elephant.



Then she flew down and untied Crocodile.





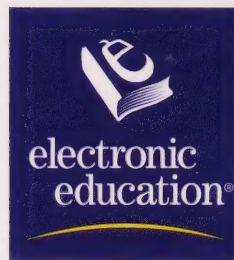
And . . .
neither Elephant nor Crocodile
has bothered Sparrow to this day.

THINK ABOUT IT

VOCABULARY WORDS

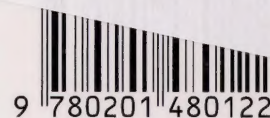


basking: lying in sunlight
and enjoying the warmth



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